Creating Custom URLs in Pacific

One of the great things about Pacific is that both MSAs and CMs can create custom URLs without contacting Colorado Interactive for assistance. Creating unique and descriptive URLs is beneficial for several reasons, including improving usability and SEO. Pacific will not allow you to use a path alias for your custom URL that is already in use by your own or another Minisite. You can tell if a URL is already taken if you get the error message in Figure 1 below when attempting to create a custom URL:
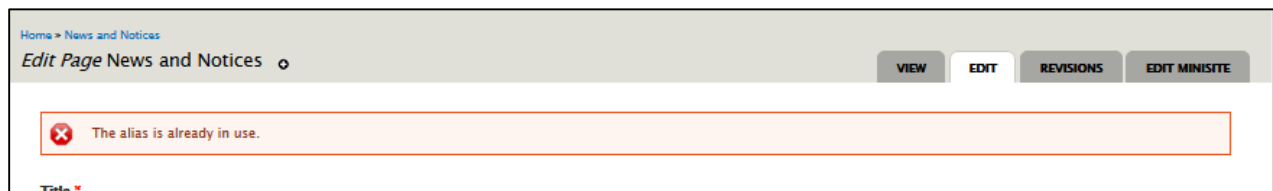

Figure 1

As a general rule, nodes will not benefit from custom URLs. For those that will, make the custom URLs as descriptive as possible. Certain topics will likely be unique to their entities, such as */radon* for CDPHE; topics unique to your entity will be easier to name without encountering an error message. However, MSAs and CMs may have more trouble attempting to find a unique name for topics that are widely addressed across entities. Some examples of common pages include:

- Applications
- About Us
- Board Members
- Careers
- Contact Us
- Divisions
- Forms
- Meetings
- Rules and Regulations

Web authors will need to be descriptive in order to create a custom URL for a node that is likely to have the same name as a previously existing node. To reduce the likelihood of getting the error message in Figure 1, you can do things like:

1. Include your entity's acronym (e.g., */contact-HCPF*)
2. Use acronyms related to the node content (e.g., */wfc* for a page about Workforce Centers)

3. Make the URL more specific (e.g., */how-to-apply* for an instructional page, instead of something general like */apply*)
4. Include meaningful keywords that users are likely to include in searches (e.g., */minisite-admin-training*)
5. If you are using a different page name and menu link title, try both in place of the vanity URL.

If you do not create a custom URL for a node that is already in use, Pacific will automatically append a number to the page title for the URL (e.g., */contact-us-17*).

A Note About Custom URLs:

It is extremely important that no nodes are titled the same thing as a Minisite that already exists. There are two situations in which this could occur:

1. If a node has the same title as a Minisite name, the automatically generated URL will conflict with that Minisite. In this situation, you must create a unique custom URL.

2. If you attempt to create a custom URL that has the same name as a Minisite, you will not get the error message in Figure 1. It is very important to double check that a path alias does not already route to a Pacific homepage prior to applying it to your content node.

It is also worth noting that creating a custom URL for an existing node will break any internal or external links to that content. Learn how to preserve your internal links using the relative path alias [here](#)!

Stay Connected!

For more tips on preparing for your migration and information about Pacific, please visit https://www.colorado.gov/goingpacific or follow us on Twitter [@Coloradosipa](#) or Facebook [/Coloradosipa](#).